

Patent Claims:

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1. A composition for improving and maintaining intestinal activity and/or for improving and/or normalizing bowel movements, characterized in that it comprises a material which, if it is degradable in the stomach and/or small intestine, is provided with a compound which does not dissolve until in the intestine, and is loaded with active compounds, for example for prophylaxis, or with laxatives in such a manner that these are predominantly or exclusively not released until in the intestine.
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2. The composition as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the material has three-dimensional polymeric networks.
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3. The composition as claimed in either of claims 1 or 2, characterized in that the material is in the form of a sponge-like structure.
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4. The composition as claimed in one of claims 1 to 3, characterized in that the material is coated with the compound.
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5. The composition as claimed in one of claims 1 to 4, characterized in that the material is introduced into a container which consists of a compound which is exclusively soluble in the intestine.
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6. The composition as claimed in one of claims 1 to 5, characterized in that the compound is introduced into the material.

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7. The composition as claimed in one of claims 1 to 6, characterized in that the compound is soluble in liquid having a pH from 5 to 10.
- 5 8. The composition as claimed in one of claims 1 to 7, characterized in that the compound is soluble in liquids having a pH from 5.5 to 8.5.
- 10 9. The composition as claimed in one of claims 1 to 8, characterized in that the compound is soluble in liquids having a pH from 6.4 ± 0.6 to 7.0 ± 0.7 .
- 15 *cat* 10. The composition as claimed in one of claims 1 to 9, characterized in that the material comprises natural, semisynthetic or synthetic polymers and also stably crosslinked bodies or combinations thereof.
- 20 11. The composition as claimed in one of claims 1 to 10, characterized in that the material comprises collagen, cellulose or alginate.
- 25 12. The composition as claimed in one of claims 1 to 11, characterized in that the material is compressible to one half to one hundredth, preferably one quarter to one fiftieth, particularly preferably one tenth to one twentieth of its original size.
- 30 13. The composition as claimed in one of the preceding claims 1 to 12, characterized in that the material can be decompressed in the intestine to two to one hundred times, preferably four to fifty times, particularly preferably ten to twenty times, its size in the compressed state.
- 35 14. The composition as claimed in one of the preceding claims 1 to 13, characterized in that it comprises

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pharmaceutically and/or biologically active substances, laxatives, nutrients or food supplements, foodstuffs, taste or stimulant substances, flavorings or other ancillary substances.

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15. The composition as claimed in one of claims 1 to 14 for use for improving and maintaining intestinal activity and for improving and/or normalizing bowel movements, characterized in that it comprises a material which, if it is degradable in the stomach and/or small intestine, is provided with a compound which does not dissolve until in the intestine and is loaded with active compounds, for example for prophylaxis, or with laxatives in such a manner that these are predominantly or exclusively not released until in the intestine.

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16. A process for preparing a composition for improving and maintaining intestinal activity as claimed in one of claims 1 to 15, characterized in that

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- a) a suspension of the material is prepared,
- b) from this suspension a sponge-like or foam-like structure is prepared by methods known per se,
- c) the material is then reversibly compressed,
- d) before, during or after step b) the material is loaded with active compounds, for example for prophylaxis, or with laxatives in such a manner that these are predominantly or exclusively not released until in the intestine and
- e) if appropriate a compound is applied to this material and/or a compound is introduced into the material and/or this material is encased with such a compound, with this compound not dissolving until in the intestine.

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- 5 17. The use of the composition as claimed in one of the preceding claims for preparing compositions for improving and maintaining intestinal activity and for improving and/or normalizing bowel movements.
- 10 18. The use of the composition as claimed in one of the preceding claims for preparing pharmaceutically active compositions and/or nutrients and/or food supplements and/or (dietetic) foods.
- 15 19. The use of the composition as claimed in one of the preceding claims for improving and maintaining intestinal activity and for improving and/or normalizing bowel movements and/or for reducing the transit time of the chyme in the intestine, combined with a prophylactic or laxative action.
- 20 20. The use of the composition as claimed in one of the preceding claims in the fields of pharmacy and/or health and/or for nutrition and/or food supplementation.